

DESTINATION: UTAH! TOURISM

AN INDUSTRY DISPATCH
FROM THE DIVISION OF TRAVEL DEVELOPMENT,
UTAH TRAVEL COUNCIL

AUTUMN, 2004



INDUSTRY-BACKED TOURISM FUNDING INITIATIVE IS GATHERING WIDE-SPREAD SUPPORT

The 2005 Legislative Session won't formally convene until January 17th. However, Interim Committees are meeting now. Opinions about bills and potential actions are being formed.

The Utah Tourism Industry Coalition (UTIC) has been working since the last legislative session with key industry partners and the Department of Community & Economic Development to craft a bill, which would guarantee a dedicated funding source to be used to market the *Utah!* brand. Utah's current situation places tourism funding in a critical condition at a time when we could be enjoying the recognition benefits of the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. *Continued, Next Pg.*



Salt Lake Valley night lights

We're Communicating a New Look!

We hope you enjoy this Autumn Issue of the new Division of Travel Development newsletter.

We hope the articles we have included regarding the funding initiative, travel events around the state, and travel council staff activities, will be helpful and of interest.

We have also included a calendar of meetings that division employees will be attending in the next while.

Let us know how you like the issue! As a staff, we look forward to working with you!

UNDER CLEAR AUTUMN SKIES, ITALY'S DONNAVVENTURA TAKES SOUTHEASTERN UTAH BY STORM



The women of Donnavventura with Canyonlands National Park as Their Scenic Backdrop

Six gorgeous young Italian women. One Roman commander-in-chief. One accommodating videographer. . . Sounds like a spaghetti sitcom, right? Well, not exactly.

In late September, Ken Kraus, the division's media relations manager, welcomed Donnavventura, an Italian hybrid adventure—travelogue—reality show as they blew through town ... Monument Valley and Moab to be exact.

Thanks to diligent collaboration among the division, the Moab Area Travel Council, the Moab Film Commission, the Film Coordinator for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, the San Juan County Travel Council, the Visit USA Committee of Italy *Continued, Pg. 3*



“ The possibility of this funding initiative passing depends critically on the support of travel & tourism organizations.

Our industry is so varied, from small bed & breakfast inns; to luxury hotels, guides and outfitters, to ski resorts, restaurants, gas stations, and destination marketing organizations.

We need everyone. City governments need to lend support, and the counties must be firmly on board.

In order for Utah to even get close to what our competitors are spending on advertising, this bill has to pass.

And it will take the entire industry - public and private partners united - to make it happen!”

UTIC Director,

Nan Groves-Anderson

FUNDING INITIATIVE CONTINUED

- According to a study by Wirthlin Worldwide, 7.1 million adults say they are more likely to vacation in Utah as a result of the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. But “advertising invitations” need to trigger this new revenue.
- Utah has been losing market share at about the same rate that its tourism marketing budget has been declining.
- Competition is fierce.
The total budget for the Arizona Office of Tourism is \$15.6 million.
New Mexico: \$14 million.
Utah: \$3.9 million (less than half the western average of \$8.2 million).

Opportunity—Utah Tourism’s Return on Investment:

- According to an advertising effectiveness study by NFO Plog Research (now known as TNS), for every \$1 spent on branding Utah, \$8.64 are generated in tax revenue.

The Economic Impact from a \$10 Million Utah Advertising Campaign:

- An additional 4.6 million visitors would spend \$1.08 billion at Utah businesses:
\$86.4 million of tax revenue
State Tax Revenue: \$63.6 million
Local Tax Revenue: \$22.8 million
Potential tax relief for Utah households would go from \$404 to \$561.
- More visitors, means more jobs in Utah!

HIGH VELOCITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEGISLATION:

- **THIS IS NOT A TAX INCREASE:** Invest a small percentage of the annual growth in sales tax revenue from tourism-related businesses in a Tourism Performance Marketing Fund used strictly for tourism marketing.
- **PERFORMANCE- BASED:** The performance of the travel and tourism industry determines how much money goes into the fund.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Utah Division of Travel Development will be required to report to the legislature on the performance of the fund annually.
- **POLICY BOARD:** A newly appointed *policy-making board* will have industry and geographic representation.
- This industry supported initiative will produce **PERFORMANCE-BASED FUNDING** to be used for:
AGGRESSIVE POSITIONING OF THE UTAH! BRAND resulting in a significant increase in demand.
CO-OP ADVERTISING with local counties and non-profit destination marketing organizations (participation is voluntary) to leverage state resources and increase exposure for local destinations and attractions.

For more information on the Tourism Industry-Backed Performance Funding Initiative, see UTIC’s web site: www.utahtourism.org
or

Visit the Division of Travel Development’s government site: travel.utah.gov

DONNAVVENTURA CONTINUED

and local and federal offices of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the production went off seamlessly.

"There were times when it felt more like vaudeville than video," recalls Ken Kraus, who organized and hosted the Italian entourage from its entry into Utah at Monument Valley to its departure from Moab. "Ronnie Baird at Goulding's Lodge bent over backwards to accommodate the crew, as did Ken Davey and Marian DeLay in Moab. Lee Sjoblom at Dead Horse Point made it happen for us there, too."

"We did the Shafer Trail in Canyonlands, Dead Horse Point State Park and Arches all in one day," Ken recalls. "Commander" Maurizio Rossi pushed the crew nearly to exhaustion, since the Utah segment was just two days out of a three month schedule that encompasses Central America, the western U.S. and Canada and, finally, Alaska. The six Italian women on the show were selected from an initial field of 12,000 applicants. Each woman will drive a Mitsubishi turbo diesel truck throughout the grueling itinerary. Donnavventura reaches over 50 million viewers on Italy's second largest private TV channel, for 10 consecutive Saturdays starting on November 20th.

Italy is an important European market for Utah, particularly in August when Italians flee Italy for their summer holidays.



Taking a red rock break

NEW APPOINTEE TO BOARD OF TRAVEL DEVELOPMENT

Georgianna Knudsen of Brigham City has been appointed by the Governor to represent northern Utah on the Board of Travel Development.

Ms. Knudsen is active in community services in Box Elder County.

She is a nurse assistant and on the University of Utah College of Nursing Advisory Board. She has also taught preschool for the deaf and taught elementary school.

Olene S. Walker,
Governor

Gayle F. McKeachnie
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Community
& Economic Development

David Harmer, Director

Division of Travel
Development

Richard Bradford, Director

Leigh von der Esch,
Deputy Director

J. Spencer Kinard,
Deputy Director

Stacey Clark,
Newsletter Editor

staceyclark@utah.gov

Board of Travel
Development

Randy Harmsen, Chair

Georgiana Knudsen,

Kim McClelland,

Stan Parrish, Terry

Porter, Gayle Stevenson,

Bob Syrett, Lucille Tuttle,

Kip Pitou (ex officio)

DIVISION PARTICIPATES IN TRADE MISSION TO SAO PAULO, BRAZIL



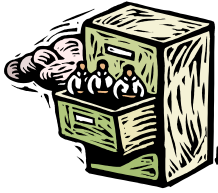
Governor Walker, and the Division's Luncheon Host, Dwight Rimmasch Enjoy a Cordial Moment with Marco Antonio Castello Branco, Executive Secretary of Tourism for the State of Sao Paulo.

The Division of Travel Development joined forces with Governor Olene S. Walker September 22-24, 2004, to showcase Utah's Destination Attractions during the Utah! Trade Mission to Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Trade Mission was coordinated through the International Business Development Office of DCED.

A country briefing conducted by U.S. Consul General, Patrick Duddy, and Senior Commercial Officer, John Harris opened the trade mission. "The briefing discussion confirmed our earlier research, which indicated a potentially robust out-bound travel market from Brazil," noted Dwight Rimmasch, International Marketing Manager for the division, "especially considering the population of 22,000,000 in the greater Sao Paulo area alone."

An educational luncheon, "The Greatest Snow on Earth"® hosted by the Division on Friday September 24th highlighted the success of the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City. Over 50 tour operators, travel agents, travel press and other Sao Paulo-based tourism associations assembled at the luncheon for presentations showcasing Utah's diverse destinations.

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Division of Travel Development Staff

Richard Bradford, Director (538-1370), **Spence Kinard**, Deputy Director (538-1710), **Leigh von der Esch**, Deputy Director (538-1318), **Elaine Watts**, Executive Assistant (538-1369), **Sheri Bintz** (538-1306) & **Diane Wilson** (538-1312), Program Support. **Stan Nance**, **Leela Beaudry**, and **Dave Harvey**, Finance (538-1374). **Scott Iverson**, Publications Manager (538-1324), **Janice Carpenter**, Publications/Visual Coordinator (538-1378). **Margaret Godfrey**, Interagency Coordinator (538-1479). **Kathleen Truman**, Rural Technical Assistance Coordinator, (435-381-2030). **Dwight Rimmasch**, Trade Marketing Manager (538-1371); **Ken Kraus**, Media Marketing Manager (538-1714). **Dave Williams**, Research Coordinator (538-1317), **Stacey Clark**, Strategic Planning Coordinator (538-1373). **Kathleen Mathie**, Receptionist/Information Outreach (538-1367), **Florence Johnson**, Fulfillment & Distribution (538-1380), **Gerry Pond**, Call Center/Distribution Supervisor (538-1381), **Dave Hansford**, Distribution/Call Center, and **Clayton Scrivner**, Customer Service/Call Center (538-1030). **Margaret Reiser**, Manager/Customer Service/ZNHA Bookstore, **Oliver Lewis**, Assistant Manager/Customer Service/ZNHA Bookstore, **Niki Wiley**, Customer Service/ZNHA Bookstore (538-1398).

Sao Paulo Trade Mission Continued

Governor Walker personalized her love of Utah. "We have such a rich heritage of cultural and scenic attractions with our five National Parks, world-class ski resort areas and friendly people," she said.

Raelene Davis, Marketing Director of Ski Utah, previewed the Ski Utah International Planner and discussed the Ski Utah Passport, exclusively for the use of international visitors. "We have so much potential in this market and we know the Brazilians will love our Utah product," explained Ms. Davis.

Delta Air Lines Commercial General Brazil, Luiz Henrique Teixeira emphasized

Delta's convenient connections to Utah. He also announced that a second daily flight from Sao Paulo to Atlanta is in the planning stages due to increased demand from the out-bound Sao Paulo market.

The event closed with a prize drawing. Thomas Perez of Teresa Perez Tours, a major Sao Paulo tour operator, won a ski vacation to Utah with transportation generously provided by Delta Air Lines.

Recapping the event with Jussara Haddad, U.S. Commercial Tourism Specialist, Dwight Rimmasch noted, "The unprecedented attendance at the luncheon shows it was more than



Tina Lewis (L), International Business Development Director lunches with Brazilian tour operators.

an educational event. We were truly supported by the 'Who's Who' of the Sao Paulo travel industry."

A complete list of those attending the event can be obtained by sending an email to Dwight Rimmasch: dwigthtr@utah.gov.

KUDOS TO UTAH SKI RESORTS

Utah's ski resorts bested their Colorado competitors' rankings of Individual Resort Attributes in **SKI** magazine's 2004 reader survey, reported the Salt Lake Tribune's, Mike Gorell in the September 9th edition.

SKI magazine executive editor, Greg Ditrinco said, "Our rankings are based on 17 categories and Utah had more No. 1s than any other state."

Deer Valley was at the top in grooming, service, and on-mountain food. Alta ranked No. 1 for snow quality and over-all value. Readers judged the weather at Solitude Mountain Resort as the best in North America, and Snowbasin Ski Area's lifts were accorded the same distinction.

Vail, Colorado resorts dominated the category of Best North American Resorts, grabbing six of the Top Ten spots. But congratulations go to Deer Valley and Park City Mountain Resort coming in at No. 2 and No. 8, respectively.

Readers of **SKIING** magazine—a companion publication to **SKI** magazine, targeting aggressive, thrill-seeking skiers—have crowned Snowbird, No. 1 in the U.S. for the past two years running.



DIVISION PROGRAM REPORTS

RESEARCH & PLANNING

Dave Williams, Research Coordinator has been providing research and presentations to the industry explaining how high-velocity economic development can occur through tourism funding. He's preparing the 2004 State and County Economic and Travel Indicator Profile Report, in addition to compiling monthly visitation statistics and tourism tax revenue information. Recently, he has spoken and/or participated in a variety of events that had economic development (including travel development) as their focus. These include the Sevier County Economic Development Conference, the Utah Rural Summit, the Emery County Economic Summit, and meetings with the Utah Travel Regions Association and the Utah Tourism Industry Coalition. He spoke at the Salt Lake Convention and Visitor Bureau's conference on Oct. 12, and will attend the Travel Industry Association of America's Marketing Outlook Forum in Phoenix, AZ on October 27-29 to learn about the latest trends and outlook for tourism in 2005. Dave is generally available to answer any questions you may have on travel research topics.

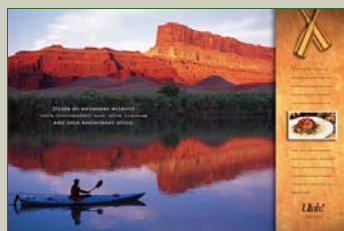
Stacey Clark, Strategic Planning Coordinator recently developed this newsletter to expand the types of information previously offered in the Travel Barometer. She's anticipating the busy months ahead working with division staff, leadership, and industry representatives to prepare for the 2005 legislative session.

Stacey does research and planning to assist the division staff, the Travel Development Board, members of the tourism industry, and constituents across the state, and to accurate the division's goals, strategic plan, and related documents. Research data, and planning ideas and documents related to the division are posted regularly on travel.utah.gov

Elaine Watts, serves as Executive Assistant to director Richard Bradford. **Diane Wilson** and **Sheri Bintz**, serve as Executive Assistants, rounding out the support service for the division staff.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

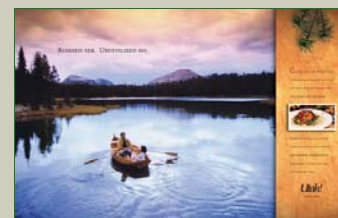
The Utah Scenic Byway program continues its upward trajectory. Utah's 13 year-old program, the first scenic byway program in the nation, has garnered over \$10 million in local, state and national grants to improve interpretation of Utah's 28 Byways. The program was certified in statute by the 2004 Legislature, naming **Margaret Godfrey**, the division's Interagency Program Manager, as Chair of the Utah Committee which has oversight responsibility for designation and non-designation of new and current byways. Margaret has formed a new alliance with committee chairs from the other four corner states and is actively involved in a program to market the connecting byways of the four states into a single destination for the automobile-traveling tourist.



Tag Line: Never Go Anywhere Without Your Topographic Map, Your Compass And Your Restaurant Guide.

ADVERTISING

All the division's advertising for Spring/Summer, 2004 focused on a warm weather message that Utah promises scenery, solitude, soft adventure, AND also fine dining and posh accommodations. This fit with our strategic goal to attract visitors who will stay longer and are willing to spend more for a vacation. Both of the two-page-spread ads also included water as a major visual element. This was to combat the perception articulated in recent focus groups that Utah was "dry and brown." The division's campaign consisted of magazine ads placed in national publications including Gourmet, Sunset, and Outside magazines. All of the ads carried the utah.com and 1-800-UTAH FUN response mechanisms. Leigh and Riester-Robb, the division's advertising agency, are currently working on winter, spring, and summer advertising plans.



Tag Line: Rugged? Yes. Uncivilized? No.

MARKETING

Ken Kraus, Media Relations Manager organized and escorted two media familiarization tours this past summer for both U. K. and U.S. writers, and facilitated media visits for a Dutch tour operator, Child magazine, Cowboys & Indians magazine and a new Insight Guide book on Utah. Ken reports that Delta Air Lines' Sky magazine is working on a southern Utah piece for 2005, and Travel & Leisure may have something in the works on Utah next year, as well.

Dwight Rimmasch, Trade Marketing Manager develops marketing programs for out-of-state tour and travel buyers showcasing Utah's unique travel destinations. He communicates contact information, and plans direct marketing opportunities to statewide associations, city and county tourism officials, destination management organizations, convention and visitors bureaus and other interested businesses in Utah. During the past few months Dwight has led discussions on "Destination Marketing" at the Garfield County Business Meeting, St. George Area Convention & Visitors Bureau International Forum, and Emery County Economic Summit. Upcoming projects include attending the Delta Gateway Showcase, the National Tour Association meeting, and World Travel Market with partners from across the state. He also manages a significant database of tour operator contacts from major markets important to Utah.

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PROGRAM REPORTS CONTINUED

PUBLICATIONS

Scott Iverson and **Janice Carpenter** are keeping the words and pictures flowing from Council Hall. The latest *Utah! Travel Guide* – “Connect with Utah” – was delivered in April and will be used through 2005. Twenty-five thousand 2005 *Utah! Scenic Calendars*, featuring Utah’s Scenic Byways, were delivered in September and are ready for holiday gift giving. Electronic publishing efforts include the Utah! Events Calendar online weekly and an e-newsletter, coordinating utah.com and travel.utah.gov (see Information Services), and well as the weekly Utah! Events Radio online. The team is in the process of updating and revising the *Utah! State of Adventure* video with Avalanche Studios.

Scott recently represented the division at a Customer Relations Management (CRM) Conference in San Francisco as part of a DCED Team, and he will soon begin revising the Travel Resources Database in anticipation of a new round of data gathering and verification for inclusion in future publications.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Internet: www.utah.com and travel.utah.gov are reaching thousands of people daily. Since January, 2004 utah.com has hosted 1,089,805 unique visitors – an average of 4,503 per day, and travel.utah.gov providing media, research and funding information - even the current weather report – has had 56,188 unique visitors so far this year. Many Internet visitors also request information or send e-mails to the division. So far this year, Information Outreach Coordinator, **Kathleen Mathie** has handled 18,227 e-mail requests.

Radio: **Gerry Pond** and **Ken Kraus** are heard on nine radio stations throughout the state every week. The live radio reports talk about what events are taking place in Utah, based on our weekly Internet Events Calendar (see Publications). They are popular with listeners in St. George, Cedar City, Price, Moab, Vernal, Manti, Richfield, and Salt Lake City. The reports vary from 5 to 15 minutes in length. In addition, division staff are regular guests on KSL radio’s Sunday travel show.

Visitor Centers: The visitor information desk and book store at Council Hall, staffed by Zion Natural History Association, and our five gateway welcome centers continue to provide information and publications to thousands of visitors. Total walk-in visitors to all facilities YTD is 455,633.

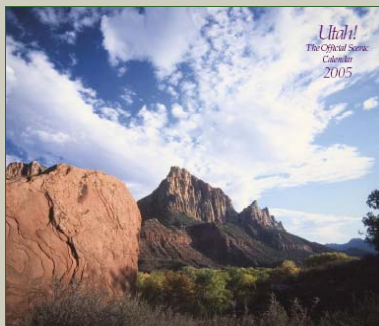
Call Center: **Gerry Pond**, **Dave Hansford** and **Clayton Scrivner** have taken and responded to 24,194 telephone calls so far this year inquiring about travel in Utah. Repeatedly, callers will compliment Utah for having a “real, live person” to talk to, and appreciate the information specialists’ helpful attitudes.

Fulfillment: **Flo Johnson**, the division’s longest serving employee – 33 years – has stuffed, labeled, sorted and mailed more than 80,000 pieces of Utah literature since January. In the same time frame, Gerry Pond has shipped more than 27,000 pounds of collateral material from the warehouse

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Kathleen Truman, Rural Development Technical Support assisted the non-profit Emery County Economic Development Council to organize a successful Economic Summit in Castle Dale in September with over 100 people in attendance. Breakout sessions focused on value-added agriculture opportunities; tourism development strategies; improving customer service; and internet marketing opportunities. Jon Huntsman, Jr. provided the closing remarks and emphasized the importance of both tourism development and rural economic development in his vision for improving Utah’s future. Dwight Rimmasch’s discussion of strategies for tourism development in the region was so popular that he received invitations from the Emery County Travel Bureau and the Carbon County Economic Development Director to return to the area for more in-depth discussions. Kathleen will continue working with economic development specialists and local people in the central Utah region to develop locally-driven tourism business opportunities.

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2005 Utah! Scenic Calendar

Division Staff “Out & About”

10/4-6	Ski Utah Media Event, New York City,
10/12 & 13	SLCVB Travel Conference / Tourism Funding Initiative
10/14	No. Utah Legislative Forum, Perry
10/14	Outdoor Recreation Task Force, Capitol Complex
10/15	Travel Council Board Mtg., E. Capitol Complex
10/15	UH&LA Annual Convention, Park City
10/20	Econ. Development & Workforce Services Interim Comm. Mtg., Capitol Complex
10/21	UTC Staff Roundtable
10/21	Travel Regions Mtg., Torrey
10/27	Ski Utah Board Mtg.
10/27-29	TIA Marketing Outlook Forum, Phoenix
10/31-11/2	Delta Gateway Show Case, Cincinnati
11/3	UTIC & St. George Chamber Mtg.
11/5-11	World Travel Market, London
11/10	Econ. Development & Workforce Services Interim Comm. Mtg., Capitol Complex
11/13-16	NTA, Toronto
11/17	SLCVB Mtg. w/ Hotel General Managers
11/18	UTC Staff Roundtable
12/2	CANAMEX Meeting
12/3	Travel Development Board Mtg., Salt Lake City
12/8-12	AeroMexico FAM Tour
12/16	UTC Staff Roundtable
12/17	Travel Regions Mtg., Ogden
12/25-28	Go West Summit, Phoenix
3/11-15	ITB, Germany
3/17-18	Greater West. Chapter, Travel & Tourism Research Assoc. Conf., Hawaii
5/3-7	TIA Intn’l Pow Wow, New York City

PROGRAM REPORTS CONTINUED

ZNHA BOOKSTORE

The Zion Natural History Association Bookstore and Information Center in Council Hall, provides everything needed to experience Utah. The bookstore has extensive, free information about every corner of the state. Manager, **Margaret Reiser**, and information specialists, **Oliver Lewis** and **Niki Wiley** are friendly, and knowledgeable enough to help guests discover, or rediscover Utah's scenery, diversity, history, and vibrant cities.

The bookstore has an eclectic selection of Utah souvenirs and collectables, postcards, posters and calendars. Books in the store vary from hiking, cooking, history, and nature, to geology, children's books, and volumes of Utah Photography. The ZNHA Bookstore is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

ESCALANTE HOSTS FIRST EVERETT RUESS FESTIVAL

"If Everett Ruess had lived a full life, he would have become one of the great artists of our time."

Utah publisher and Everett Ruess Festival patron, Gibbs Smith

By the time he was 19-years-old, Californian Everett Ruess was an artistic prodigy, having studied with painter Maynard Dixon and photographers Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange. In the early 1930's he became fascinated with the red rock desert, and spent months alone wandering the lonely crevasses of southern Utah.

By the time he was 20-years-old, Everett Ruess had disappeared, without a trace and forever, into the canyons carved by the Escalante River. . . He left behind a remarkable collection of poems, essays, watercolors and block prints. *In life Everett Ruess was an enigma, in death he has become a legend.*

This year, the 70th anniversary of Everett's disappearance, the towns of Escalante and Boulder, as well as the Division of Travel Development, celebrated both life and legend on the first weekend of October, with a three-day Escalante Canyons / Everett Ruess Days Festival. The "working arts festival" included, of course, lots of art, but more importantly to organizers, it encouraged visitors to experience the magic of the Escalante area.

"Over 500 people came to Escalante and Boulder, and celebrated their own artistic response to the area," said Harriet Priska, festival organizer. Priska and co-organizer Steve Roberts were especially honored to have the Ruess family attend the event. Everett's brother, 95 year-old Waldo Ruess and his family traveled from Virginia, Oregon and Washington to honor their famous relative.

Division staff member, Margaret Godfrey's favorite event was the kick-off musical production on the lawn of Boulder Mountain Lodge. Folk singer Dana Robinson drove from Ashville, North Carolina to sing his ballads about Everett Ruess. Joining him was Brian Ruess, who read favorite passages from his uncle's writings. The interweaving of music and word was so profound that the concert was repeated the next day in Escalante.



Margaret Godfrey (R), and folk singer, Dana Robinson



Everett's brother, Waldo Ruess (in hat), with wife, Conchita (L) and Everett's nieces, Christella and Michelle (R). Everett's nephew, Brian Ruess, is at the far right

In other highlights, artists from as far away as Georgia and Minnesota entered a Plein Air competition, setting up outdoor easels to capture the landscape. Of 35 contestants, Utahn, Doug Braithwaite won the first prize of \$2,000 for his rendering of the sandstone cliffs around Boulder.

W.L. Rusho, editor of Vagabond for Beauty, a collection of Ruess' writings, shared facts, anecdotes, slides and photographs at Escalante High School. A dozen concerts were played in the area, including one by Utah Cowboy Poet Hal Cannon, who sang his own

Everett Ruess ballad. Artists and craftspeople sold their wares and demonstrated their skills, weaving rugs, wire wrapping semi precious stones, and creating block prints.

The division's goal of increased economic development for the area was well met. Lodging was fully booked, local guides and outfitters did a brisk business, and restaurants were filled with jovial patrons.

A second annual Everett Ruess Days Festival is planned for next fall.

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Take a good look at this photo of the State Capitol Building, because it's going to be a while before the building and grounds will appear this stately and colorful again.

After spending two years erecting new structures behind the Capitol to accommodate the House of Representatives and the State Senate, work has finally begun on the Capitol Building and surrounding grounds.

This summer, the Capitol officially closed its doors to the public on August 7th. Since then, most of the landscaping has been removed, and even the familiar statue of Massasoit, bundled up and put in storage.

Plans call for the Capitol to be made seismically sound by Fall, 2008. Afterward, it will be open again for visitors and tours. During the construction phase, all the paintings and statues housed inside the Capitol will be carefully preserved. Throughout 2007 and 2008, new trees, lawn, and gardens will be planted.

Interestingly, in addition to making the Capitol Building earth-quake safe, the changes being made to the buildings and grounds reflect many of the original architect, Richard K.A. Kletting's plans for the Capitol and its surroundings.

Utah!
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